(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) to (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that it has liberalized the norms for priority sector lending in agriculture in respect of activities relating to the distribution of inputs for activities allied to agriculture, produce marketing loans, financing of dealers in agricultural machinery etc. In so far the distribution of inputs, such as cattle feed, poultry feeds, etc. the limit has been increased to Rs. 25 lakh from Rs. 15 lakh. The credit limit under Produce Marketing Loans has been increased to Rs. 5 lakh from the present limit of Rs. 1 lakh. The repayment schedule for such credit has also been enhanced to twelve months from six months. In so far the financing of dealers in drip irrigation/sprinkler irrigation system/agricultural machinery, the limit has been increased from Rs. 10 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh.

(c) and (d) As reported by RBI, the finance extended by banks under the scheme for financing Agri-clinics and Agri-business centers will be treated as direct finance to agriculture under priority sector lending. Banks have, accordingly been advised in August, 2002 in this regard.

Task force on withdrawal of concessions

2735. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an eleven members task force has recently been set up to consider proposals for withdrawal of various concessions and exemptions from the next year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the task force is likely to submit its report and by when the withdrawal is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. This Task Force is headed by Dr. Vijay Kelkar with the following terms of reference:—

(i) Rationalization and simplification of the direct taxes with a view to minimizing exemptions, removing anomalies and improving

equity.

(ii) Improvement in tax-payer services so as to reduce compliance cost, impart transparency and facilitate voluntary compliance.

(iii) Re-designing procedures for strengthening enforcement so as to improve compliance of direct tax laws.

(iv) Any other matter related to the above points.

(c) The Task Force has presented a consultation paper on 2nd November, 2002 which has been made public for wider discussion and comments. The Government is examining them and shall formulate views only after full examination of the recommendations.

Notice to Loan Defaulters

2736. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Bank of Hyderabad has issued notices to loan defaulters to recover loans during the last three months;

(b) if so, the number of notices issued during this period; and

(c) the total amount of loans to be recovered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Bank has issued 150 notices to the defaulting borrowers during this period for an amount of Rs. 69.33 crore.

Misuse of Export Promotion Schemes of Companies

2737. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of companies in Delhi who cheated Government during the last two years by misusing export promotion schemes such as duty drawback, duty free replenishment certificate scheme and duty exemption pass book scheme;